

# MODERN ISRAEL

## AN ADVENTURE OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

*An Address delivered by*

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AT THE

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

JANUARY 11, 1955

*Published by the*  
**ISRAEL OFFICE OF INFORMATION**  
**11 E. 70th Street, New York 21, N. Y.**

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## MODERN ISRAEL —

### AN ADVENTURE OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

Four thousand years of history have extended their span between Israel's first nationhood and her restoration to freedom at the turning point of this century. The redemption from Egyptian bondage must be regarded in any serious view of history as one of the authentic points of climax in the progress of mankind. In the words of Henry George: "From between the paws of the rock-hewn Sphinx rises the genius of human liberty; and the trumpets of the Exodus throb with the defiant proclamation of the rights of man."

These forceful phrases do not overstate the case. The flight across the Red Sea and Sinai preserved a revolutionary idea, which could never have evolved in the idolatrous despotism of the Pharaohs. The idea was the sovereignty of God, the Ruler of the universe, omnipotent, one and indivisible, the embodiment of righteousness and the loving Father of all creation. From this idea there flowed acceptances and rejections which came to dominate life amongst the children of man. Recognizing this event as the beginning of our true destiny we, the descendants of those fleeing slaves have, in all succeeding generations, commemorated the ancient saga. Our tradition, to this day, exhorts every Jew to recite the story of the Exodus from Egypt at the appointed season as though he personally had experienced this redemption from servitude to freedom.

The narrative of this rebellion against idolatry by men charged with the custody of an irreplaceable idea also occurs in the history of thought in a more secular aspect. The Exodus is the original and classic episode of national liberation. The memory of Israel's first struggle for freedom has inspired and consoled many subsequent movements for national independence. When Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson were consulted on the emblem of the future American Union they suggested that the Seal of the United States should represent the Children of Israel fleeing across the parted waters of

the Red Sea on their way to freedom. This portrayal was to be surmounted by the uncannily Hebraic slogan: "Resistance to Tyrants is Obedience to God."

It is not, I think, presumptuous to believe that future generations will keep the memories of Israel's modern revival with a similar reverence and tenacity. This will certainly come to pass in the particular domain of Jewish history. Nothing since the miraculous redemption four thousand years ago can compete in our history with this recent transition from martyrdom to sovereignty, this most sudden ascent from the depths of agony to new peaks of opportunity and pride. The attainment of Israel's independence seven years ago is already much more than a political or secular event in the Jewish consciousness. The date is bound to be numbered amidst the festivals of a people whose other temporal milestones have endured with rare constancy.

## **BRIDGE BETWEEN THREE CONTINENTS**

I have come to this abode of Christian faith and learning to suggest that Israel's resurgence is an event to be conceived in the highest dimensions of human history. It evokes from the past and may portend for the future a deep lesson on the nature of spiritual impulses. The attention which this event has already received in the thought and writing of our age is itself a proof of some special quality within it. It is evident, however, that if Israel's rebirth comes to have this eternal renown, it will not be because of any material dimensions which belong to it. There is nothing global, or even massive, about the State of Israel in political terms. The territory of our new independence is great in history, but pathetically meagre in geography. True, it is the bridge between the three continents of the ancient world. It looks out over the highway which has marked the fate of migrations and invasions of history's pageant. But in the strategic calculations of the atomic century this is a small and humble piece of earth. The bridge is fragile; the highway is narrow, and in the age of air transportation it no longer obtrudes itself inevitably athwart the paths of conquest and empire.

The population directly affected falls short of two million. Even when we portray this event in its real essence, as a collective climax



in the history of the Jewish people, it still remains true that the conscious agents of Israel's revival are but a small fraction of the total human family. Clearly then, if modern Israel is to be regarded as a historic incident of universal scope, this is because of a stature to be ascribed to it in a completely different dimension. If modern Israel is to have any elements of greatness, then this quality must be vindicated in the spiritual realm.

To say this is not to deny that some of Israel's material achievements are impressive and sometimes deeply moving. The collective survival of the Jewish people is itself a rare event of history. Many other peoples have lost their independence under the heel of invading empires; but no people other than this, having been so engulfed, has shown such a capacity for recuperation as to preserve amidst martyrdom and dispersion all the elements of its union and identity — its language and tradition, its consciousness of attachment to the land of its origin, and the undying hope of eventual restoration. For long centuries this people, whithersoever it wandered, continued to regard its inner life as rooted in a distant land which few could ever hope to see with their own eyes. This connection, which for many generations was an act of mystic faith, became transformed, against all material calculations, into one of the political realities of our age. The banner of a free Israel now flies proudly again in the family of nations from which it had been absent for so many tragic generations.

## **SANCTUARY FOR DEMOCRACY**

There is surely something here to arrest the attention of those who study history in terms of national politics and international relations. Nor are these the only achievements which may be accounted remarkable in secular terms. There is the pioneering toil and sacrifice which have transformed the wilderness to a semblance of its ancient fertility. There is the epic of mass immigration which has brought hundreds of thousands of returning newcomers to our shores. There are great efforts, and at times serious results, in the increase of industrial and agricultural resources. There is the formation of a new culture, welding many varied immigrant traditions, tongues and experiences into the unified tapestry of a distinctive civilization, in the image of the ancient Hebrew past. There is the struggle against the

ravages of pestilence and erosion which had debased the physical aspect of our land and degraded its historic reputation as "the perfection of beauty, the joy of the entire earth." There is the adventure of establishing within a region dominated by despotism and autocracy a sanctuary for the democratic way of life and the principles of free government. There are advances in literature, the sciences and arts which without yet reaching the peaks of the ancient revelations, are yet significant and promising in relation to the circumstances of time and of space in which they have been accomplished. Nor can I omit from the positive record of Israel's achievement the turbulent struggle for physical security by a small people besieged on all its embattled frontiers by an unyielding and comprehensive hostility. To have achieved so large a volume of international recognition within so brief a time and against such heavy challenge is also among the most notable of Israel's victories.

If despite all this, we concentrate our gaze upon the spiritual aspects of Israel's achievement and destiny, it is not because we renounce our claim to sympathetic appraisal in political, economic, social, and even military history. But when all is said and done there have been greater battles, more far-reaching economic upheavals, vaster irrigation projects, broader revelations of physical power than those which we have recorded, memorable as they are for us. Moreover, even these achievements by Israel, while being political, economic or social in their outward aspect, are primarily significant as illustrations of spiritual forces. They are spectacular testimony to the power of the human will. Rarely in history has any achievement been recorded against heavier calculations of chance. All the circumstances of time and place argued against its success. A few decades ago the very prospect that an independent Jewish state could be established in its ancient homeland appeared so fantastic as to bring its advocates under suspicion of insanity. Statesmen and diplomats to whom the idea was broached in the early years of the First World War were startled at hearing so eccentric an idea even submitted to their official attention. A British Ambassador in Paris to whom our first President, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, summarized this project in 1915 wrote in his diary that he had encountered a remarkable contradiction — a man of eminent scientific attainments with a keen power of rational analysis who, on this particular issue, appeared to have gone

completely off his head. Back in London, Prime Minister Asquith expressed surprise that one of his cabinet colleagues of Jewish faith, normally a man of excessive rationalism, was afflicted with delirium on this special point.

Today, with the third Jewish commonwealth in tangible existence, it is the skeptics and the rationalists who appear incongruous to our eyes. Yet their skepticism seemed then to rest on strong foundations. After all, the Jewish people was dispersed and divided, split up into countless divergent fragments, lacking any element of distinctive political unity. The greater part of them dwelt thousands of miles away from the prospective scene of their national revival. The land itself appeared to have been sucked dry of all its pristine vitality and to offer no prospect of successful resettlement. Moreover, it was neither empty nor available. It was controlled by strong nationalisms and imperialisms and coveted by others, all of which had a far stronger chance of possession than had a dispersed and politically anonymous people. The concept of a Jewish nationhood or indeed of any special link between the Jewish people and its original homeland was completely unrecognized in the jurisprudence of nations. It seemed unlikely that the Zionist program could possibly overcome such an accumulation of hostilities and natural adversities.

## **VINDICATION OF FAITH**

Yet within a single lifetime we have passed from a world in which the existence of an independent Israel seemed inconceivable into a world which seems inconceivable without its existence. I know of few more tangible testimonies in history to the power of the human will to assert itself against material odds. This is, perhaps, the primary value of Israel's rebirth to all those who are concerned with the vindication of faith against the fatalistic or deterministic theories of history, which see the human being not as the primary agent of historic processes but merely as their helpless subject matter. Thus, quite apart from its context in the annals of the Jewish people, the rebirth of modern Israel would earn its place in history as a crushing argument in the eternal discussion between the claims of faith, and the doctrines which deny the human will any central part in governing the world's destiny. Those materialistic doctrines would have an



impossible task to perform to explain Israel's revival solely in material or economic terms.

Now this belief in the power of the human will is a recurrent theme in Israel's history. The most distinctive attribute of Israel's character, the source of some weakness but of greater strength is this stubborn, tenacious refusal to recognize the distinction between imagination and reality. In the grammar of classical Hebrew there is none of the sharp differentiation possessed by modern languages between that which is and that which shall be. This deliberate confusion between imagination and reality, between the will and the fact, has been illustrated at many stages of our history. In 1918, Dr. Weizmann went up to Mt. Scopus, overlooking Jerusalem, to perform the ceremony of opening a new university. In its outward forms this resembled similar ceremonies whereby universities have been opened and dedicated in many parts of the world: the same forms, the same oratory, the same profuse platitudes as have been repeated on countless such occasions. There was one circumstance which made this solemnity distinctive. This was the fact that the university being opened did not exist at all. It was unrepresented even by a cornerstone. There were no means for its erection, and indeed no rational certainty that those who aspired to its establishment would ever live in the country at all. Yet because the establishment of a university in Jerusalem was for us a matter of passionate and intense will, the absence of these physical conditions was not an adequate reason to abstain from all the acts and gestures which should mark its fulfillment. Then, surely enough, within a decade the university existed and the ceremony, even in retrospect, no longer seems quixotic. This deliberate confusion between imagination and reality marks all our religion and folklore.

## **POWER OF HUMAN SPIRIT**

Now just as the establishment of Israel proves the dominant power of the human spirit, so is this theme illustrated by many acts which have unfolded themselves within the general process. The most vivid example is to be found in our immigration movement. The dispersed Jewish communities from which this immigration came were utterly divergent in all material things. Their social, economic, political and



linguistic backgrounds had nothing in common. Unity and solidarity existed only in the plane of spiritual allegiance. Here then was a convincing experiment for proving the relative strength of the material and the spiritual forces. If material elements were really decisive then the influences of division and alienation would prevail. Spiritual unity here had not merely to exist but actually to overcome a great aggregate of divisive material forces. That it did so triumph and that hundreds of thousands responded by immigration to the call and the challenge of Israel's sovereignty proved that unity will prevail against divergence, provided that the unity is truly spiritual and the divergence is only material. The Ingathering of the Exiles in modern Israel also represents the most precise and tangible fulfillment of Prophecy available to all those in all Faiths who accept the literal truth of the Biblical promises "and I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and will bring them again into their own land and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel, by the streams and in all the inhabitable places of the country."

Thus far I have spoken of Israel's establishment as a general victory for spiritual forces. But we also owe attention to the particular lineage of Israel's spiritual history, which has now entered upon a new dispensation. This tradition which was saved from extinction and endowed with a new birth of freedom has played no ordinary role in the evolution of the human spirit. All that is essential and authentic in modern theistic traditions can be traced back ultimately to the achievements and insights of Israel in the previous era of her independent national life. The consciousness that the Hebrew mind had had such a strong impact on human thought caused millions throughout the world to be exalted by the prospect that this tradition was now to be reinstated in the shelter of free political and social institutions. The union of this people with that land, through the medium of its incomparable language, had once given mankind its deepest experience of revelation. Ancient Israel had taught individual morality, social justice and universal peace. That the conditions in which that florescence had been achieved should once again be restored was a prospect that could not fail to appeal to any sensitive imagination.

## FAMILY OF CULTURES

The community of nations is also a society of cultures and civilizations. I notice this variety very directly as I look around the table at the United Nations. Many modern States, whatever their formal relationship to established religion, exemplify and embody the Christian civilization in its various forms. Some fifteen modern states are dominated by the heritage of Islam. Three or more sovereignties in the Far East are cast in the mould of the Buddhist tradition. There are many states, as we know only too well, which uphold the materialistic philosophies of our age. But until seven years ago there was one culture, and one alone, which had no distinctive representation in the family of nations; one civilization which nowhere on earth could test its ideals by their power of response to the challenge of statehood, society and international relations. No single government anywhere spoke on the grave international issues in the voice of the Hebrew tradition. When we think of the influence which this tradition has exerted on the currents of historic progress, this was surely an intolerable paradox. In our age, for the first time since the legions of Titus subjugated Jerusalem, the Hebrew tradition has become embodied in free political institutions, on a level of equality with all other nations in the human family. By this act of remedy, the family circle of the world's free cultures has become complete. The community of nations is now a comprehensive symphony of the traditions and cultures of mankind.

It is true, of course, that even after the destruction of the Jewish Kingdoms, the Hebrew concept, working through Christianity and Islam and within the national traditions of countless peoples, continued its creative course. It would be unduly restrictive to limit the story of the Hebrew mind to those expressions of it which were realized in the period of separate national independence. Nevertheless, it is a fact that it was in conditions of nationhood in the Land of Israel that the Hebrew spirit rose to levels of inspiration which it never subsequently achieved in conditions of exile and dispersion. The stream of Hebrew civilization nourished the great rivers of Christianity and Islam; but its own native waters continued to flow perennially fresh. Now the Hebrew mind has escaped the great handicap and reproach of homelessness. No longer need we poignantly

recite in the words of the Bible: "They have appointed me to keep vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept."

## **BURDEN ON CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE**

The many aspects of this revival which belong ostensibly to political history, cannot be denied their place in a spiritual appraisal. The homelessness and martyrdom of the Jewish people was not merely a source of Jewish grief and of international political tension; it was also a burden upon the Christian conscience. The weight of this burden became heavy beyond endurance in the aftermath of the Second World War, when the curtain went up on the burnt and mangled bodies of six million Jews, including a million children. The Jewish people had fallen victim to the most fearful agony which had ever beset any family of the human race. A whole continent was saturated with its blood and haunted by its unexpiated sacrifice. As the world rose from the ravages of the Second World War, it came perilously near to creating an injustice more heinous than any which had been eliminated by the triumph of the Allied cause. It became horribly but seriously possible that every nation would be granted its freedom, amongst those which had suffered under the heel of tyranny, except the people which had suffered the most. All the victims of tyranny would be established in sovereignty, except the first and the most sorely ravaged amongst the targets of totalitarian persecution. If the world order had been established under Christian leadership upon this discrimination, it would surely have been conceived with an intolerable measure of original guilt.

## **ACT OF UNIVERSAL EQUITY**

From this spiritual peril the community of nations cleansed itself belatedly, perhaps a little too grudgingly, but nevertheless decisively, when it ordained and later recognized the establishment of Israel. An international society including a Jewish State, and an international society after the Second World War excluding any satisfaction of the Jewish claim to equality, would have been two totally antithetical concepts from the moral and ethical point of view. Thus the renewal of Israel's sovereignty, though ostensibly a fact of political



organization was, in the deeper sense, an act of universal equity. It is a stage of preferment in the history of the Christian conscience.

The same consideration applies with particular force when we examine the problem of equity in its regional aspect. No people benefited more lavishly than the Arabs from the new inheritance of freedom bequeathed by the victories of the Allied powers in two World Wars and the establishment of the United Nations. In an area where not a single free Arab or Moslem had lived in political independence four decades ago, there were now to be created seven, eight and then nine separate Arab sovereignties extending over a vast sub-continent from Pakistan to the Central Mediterranean, from the Taurus mountains to the Persian Gulf. This region of Arab independence was immeasurably rich in physical power. Great fertile valleys spread out within it. Abundant rivers flowed across its lands. Unlimited resources of mineral and natural wealth lay beneath its soil. Never since the golden age of the Moslem Caliphate, a full millenium ago, had the Arab world commanded such elements of power, strength and opportunity as those which now came within its grasp.

## **SMALL SHARE OF FREEDOM**

Here again the international conscience was faced with a burning problem of equity. Will it be considered right for the Arab people to hold sway over a vast continent, and wrong for the Jewish people to establish its independence in a mere fragment of this huge domain? Would it be the decree of history that the Arabs must be independent everywhere and the Jewish people nowhere — not even in the land which owed all its identity and renown in history to its connection with the Hebrew tradition? This was the problem of conscience which underlay those turbulent political discussions in international forums and in the chancelleries of the World powers. Here again there was the peril of an award so one-sided and discriminatory in its nature as to weigh down the international conscience for generations to come. After many hesitations the world community purged itself of any such reproach. It rightly established and encouraged the emancipation of the Arab people on an almost imperial scale. But the benefit, nay the elementary right, which it conferred upon the Arabs



in such abundance was also bestowed upon the Jewish people, albeit within more meagre and austere limits. This picture of an Arab freedom beyond the wildest dreams of recent generations, side by side with an immeasurably more modest satisfaction of the principle of Jewish independence should stand before us whenever we consider the spiritual implications of the controversy between Arab and Israel nationalism. It would have been an indelible disgrace to the cause of universal justice if a world which had rightly bequeathed this vast liberation to the Arab nations had begrudged the Jewish people its small share of Freedom. The morality expressed in the parable of Naboth's vineyard would have come as a cloud over the life of the Middle East.

## **ISRAEL'S CULTURAL DESTINY**

As we survey the origins of Israel's independence in spiritual terms, we cannot fail to let our minds linger in speculation on the question of Israel's cultural destiny. In the final resort, modern Israel will vindicate the efforts, the sacrifices, the longings invested in its rebirth to the degree that it strives towards high levels of intellectual and cultural progress. As a military power, as a political force or as an economic unit, Israel faces horizons which are restricted by deficiencies of material power. Much, of course, remains to be achieved in political organization, in the strengthening of security and in economic consolidation. But in these realms Israel will never compete with the might and influence of the great continental and imperial powers. The only domain in which we are free to soar to the highest peaks available to any nation are those of spiritual, scientific, and cultural progress. However pressing are Israel's preoccupations with physical security and economic welfare, the challenge of cultural achievement cannot be set aside. Would we not be an extraordinary people if we were to devote all our efforts to those material fields in which, after all, our limitations are inexorable, and stand aside from the only areas in which, at least, the potentialities of greatness lie open before us.

These considerations invite our attention to Israel's aspirations in religion, literature, science and art. Our intensive efforts in these

fields is not something marginal or secondary to our concern: it touches the very core and essence of our destiny.

### **THREE ELEMENTS FOR NEW CULTURE**

Three elements are available to us in the formation of Israel's new culture. First, there is the Hebrew biblical tradition expressed in our glorious language and evoked by the physical associations of the country itself. This is no new Esperanto nation writing its history upon a clean slate. Modern Israel is, in its own consciousness and in that of the world, the direct lineal descendant of the ancient Hebrew civilization which exercised such a potent influence on the thought and spirit of mankind. It is no small thing, I assure you, for the citizen of modern Israel to speak the same Hebrew language as that in which Amos wrote the prophecies of social justice, in which Isaiah proclaimed the vision of universal peace, and Ezekiel contemplated the mysteries of regeneration and resurrected hope. In our educational process in modern Israel a great source of enrichment is to be found in the historic memories evoked by the very hills and valleys in which our people had resumed its national story. The sentiment of belonging, in the most intimate way, to the great sweep of Israel's history in this immortal land has a greater influence than is commonly realized in the formation of our national character. The emblems of our modern Israel statehood carry the modern citizen of Israel back to its roots in the early Jewish Kingdom. Our literary movement and recent discoveries in archaeology are also constant reminders to our people of this primary element in their spiritual formation.

### **ACCUMULATED EXPERIENCE**

The second element in Israel's culture is the experience accumulated by the Jewish people in its wanderings after the period of national independence. The years of dispersion and persecution were also a period of constant interplay between the Hebrew mind and the cultures of Europe and the New World. The Rabbinical and Talmudical literature, the post-Biblical Hebrew poetry and philosophy, the attachments of the Jewish people to the arts and sciences of the

western world, are all part of the reservoir from which modern Israel draws its sustenance.

The third element available for our cultural development is Western civilization, with special reference to its political institutions and its scientific and technological progress. It is Israel's fortune to be the sole representative in its immediate region of political democracy and scientific advance which are the two most distinctive sources of strength in the European and American civilization. This western civilization is strongly expressed amongst us by the Anglo-Saxon tradition with which Israel has two links of special intimacy. First, the great bulk of the free and extant Jewish people is a part of the English-speaking world; and second, the tradition of the English-speaking people is not something alien or external to Israel's life and experience. It is itself morally derived from the original Hebrew tradition of which Israel is the modern representative and embodiment.

From the effervescence of these three elements — the Hebrew biblical tradition, the broader Jewish experience, Western science and political organization — from these the culture of modern Israel will emerge. There is, of course, no way of ensuring that the result will be of universal significance. We cannot promise a new period of revelation. It is not for us to command by our will the inscrutable sources of inspiration. All that we can do is to create opportunities and conditions whereby to express whatever potentialities lie within our soul, as it seeks communion with the great mysteries of intellectual and spiritual creation. We have at last restored to our people the conditions of a creative culture — pride of soil; a sense of historic continuity; deep roots in a superbly aristocratic, cultural tradition; and the special exaltation which attends a people in the great hours of its national revival. Who can really be certain that these conditions will not bring a message at least in the spirit and quality of our original inheritance?

## **THE GREAT ISSUE OF THIS GENERATION**

I am certain that your invitation to me to discuss these high themes within this Catholic sanctuary reflects your conviction that the unfolding of Israel's career as a modern nation is a matter of



moment and concern to the Christian world. The great issue in this generation is drawn, not between Christianity and Judaism, or between Israel and the Christian nations. The frontier lies rather between those who assert and those who deny the supremacy of faith and of freedom. You and we occupy different areas of tradition, experience and outlook, but we occupy them on the same side of that fateful demarcation. Our differences as Jews and as Christians are not insignificant, and we should not be disposed to obscure them. It may well be that those elements of our personality which are separate and distinctive are precisely the most creative parts of our contribution to the common cause. But if the rise of Israel is a victory for the human spirit, a triumph of international integrity, a burden removed from the international conscience, the addition of a new voice to the symphony of human freedom, then this is a victory for the Christian cause as well as a direct salvation for the Jewish people.

It is, therefore, memorable and significant that the Christian world lent its sympathy to Israel's revival. The great Catholic countries of Europe and Latin America were amongst those who most ardently sustained Israel's struggle for independence and recognition. Our devotion to a kindred heritage, our common respect for human values, our unremitting resistance to tyranny, are unifying forces which transcend all secondary divergences of judgment or interest. The people of Israel who first in history rebelled against barbarian and pagan empires, this people which raised the first voice against idolatry — this people in its new life of independence will never bow the knee to totalitarian dictatorship.

## **UNDERLYING FRATERNITY**

These common ideals of Judaism and Christianity, of Israel and of other free nations command us to assert our underlying fraternity. A distinguished prelate of the Catholic church, Msr. Gustave Franceschi, wrote of his visit to Israel last year in these terms:

"We understand that the Hebrew people has a spiritual connection with us, that their strange survival goes beyond the customary norms by which the life of an ordinary nation evolves; and we Christians, if we have not lost the sense of Christianity, cannot but perceive to what a profound extent modern Israel is linked to our own salvation. One merely has to read St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans to see this."



Now these solidarities can serve as a bridge across controversies which sometimes disturb our essential kinship. An understanding of the spirit of the Christian world ranks very high among Israel's chief aspirations. We are fully aware that many causes and assets sacred to Christianity lie within our control, and demand our most vigilant reverence. We have, therefore, never ceased in recent years to proclaim our readiness to place under international influence the Holy Places in Jerusalem which are the cradle and inspiration of the Christian faith. By such a solution, reconciling the full political independence of the people of the Holy City with international interest in whatever is truly universal in Jerusalem, we could achieve a double purpose. We should prevent an encroachment on the political liberties of Jerusalem's population, while at the same time acknowledging the moral authority of the world communities over the sanctuaries of the Christian faith. Need I remind you that political freedom and national self-expression are themselves spiritual objectives of the highest value; that Jerusalem, the cradle of democratic thought, is the last place on earth in which citizens should be deprived of freedom and the satisfaction that national loyalties foster; and that no religious purpose could triumph in a discontented political community alienated from its national allegiance. These are the considerations which have caused the governments of Israel and of the United States to cooperate so constantly within the United Nations on behalf of solutions which would respect both the sovereignty and secular independence of Jerusalem's population, and the acknowledged rights of the Christian world to see its Holy Places kept immune from turbulence and desecration. I believe that this attitude is now shared by a majority of the delegates of members of the United Nations.

## **PRAISE OF ISRAEL ACTIONS**

In the same spirit, you will understand how deeply we have welcomed the warm praise expressed by Msr. Antonio Vergani, representative of the Latin Patriarch in Israel, by the Very Rev. Father Brunet and by visiting Cardinals and Prelates, to the efforts of my government to ease the journeys of pilgrims, to effect a road link to Mount Tabor and to repair the ravages inflicted by war on some of the buildings and properties of the Catholic churches in Israel. In

paying this warm tribute to the Government of Israel for its "substantial subventions, enabling the rehabilitation of the Hospice of Notre Dame de France in Jerusalem," Father Brunet eloquently and devoutly concludes: "May God vouchsafe us to see this edifice arisen from its ruins, and pilgrims coming once again to recite their prayers on the soil of this Holy Land, where spiritual interests should bring all hearts together in peace."

This is indeed the very goal of Israel's spiritual adventure, in the freedom of its ancient home — to live a national life consecrated to a universal vision of fraternity and peace. We have not accomplished every stage of that journey. The road stretches out before us, long and hard. But if at least we labor to serve this ideal within the limits of our human imperfection, the new era of Israel's freedom will be not unworthy of the proud inheritance from which she derives the glory of her name.



